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ABSTRACT

Distributed by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Education, and Health and Human Services, this pamphlet provides parents with information and advice about their infants in the twelfth month of life. Following a brief description of developmental characteristics at this age, the pamphlet offers advice on a variety of topics, including: feeding, breastfeeding, health and safety, routines and rituals, developmental stages, questions parents ask, and parenting styles. The pamphlet concludes with a list of relevant information resources for families. (HTH)

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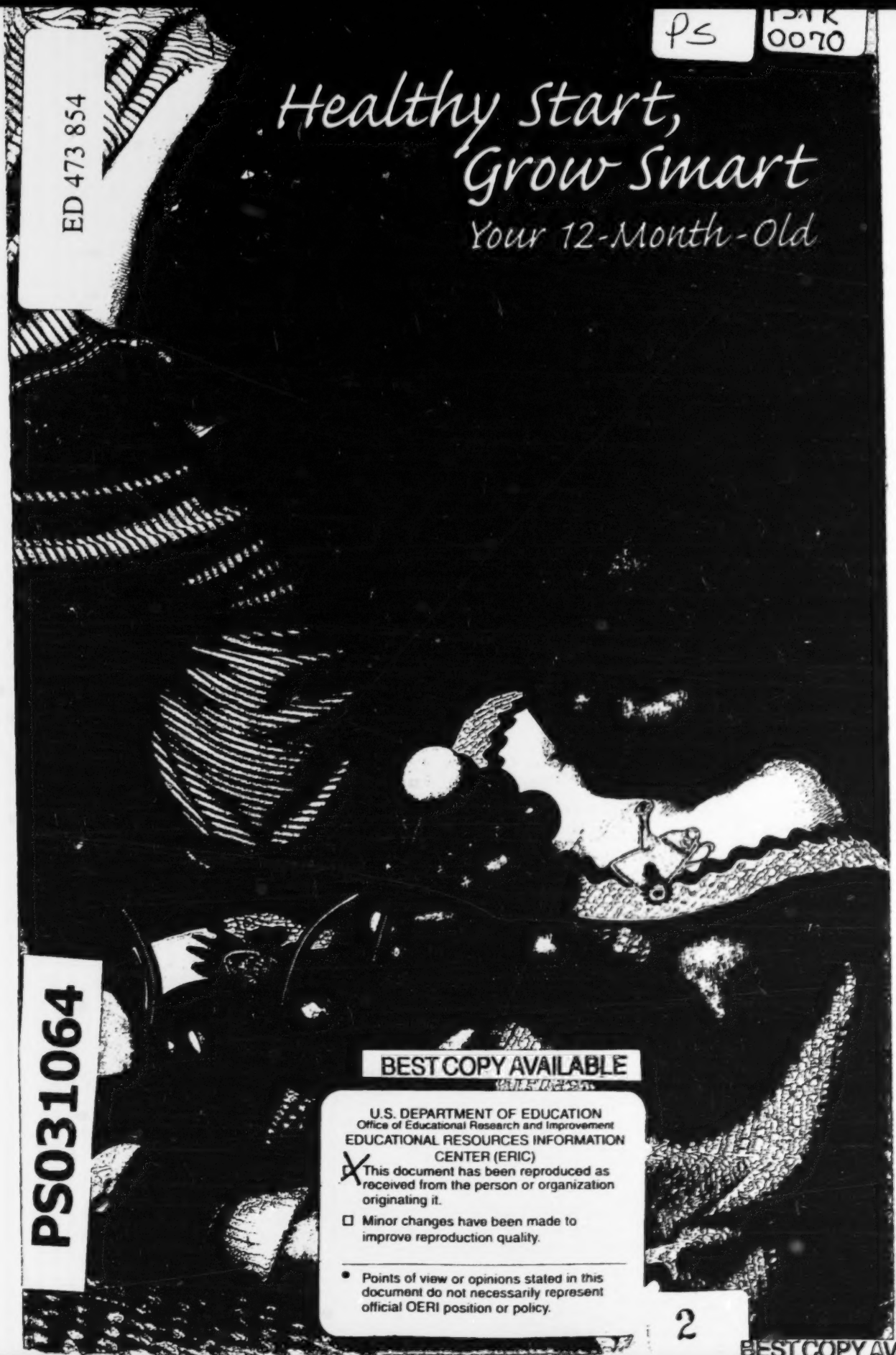
Healthy Start, Grow Smart

Your 12-Month-Old



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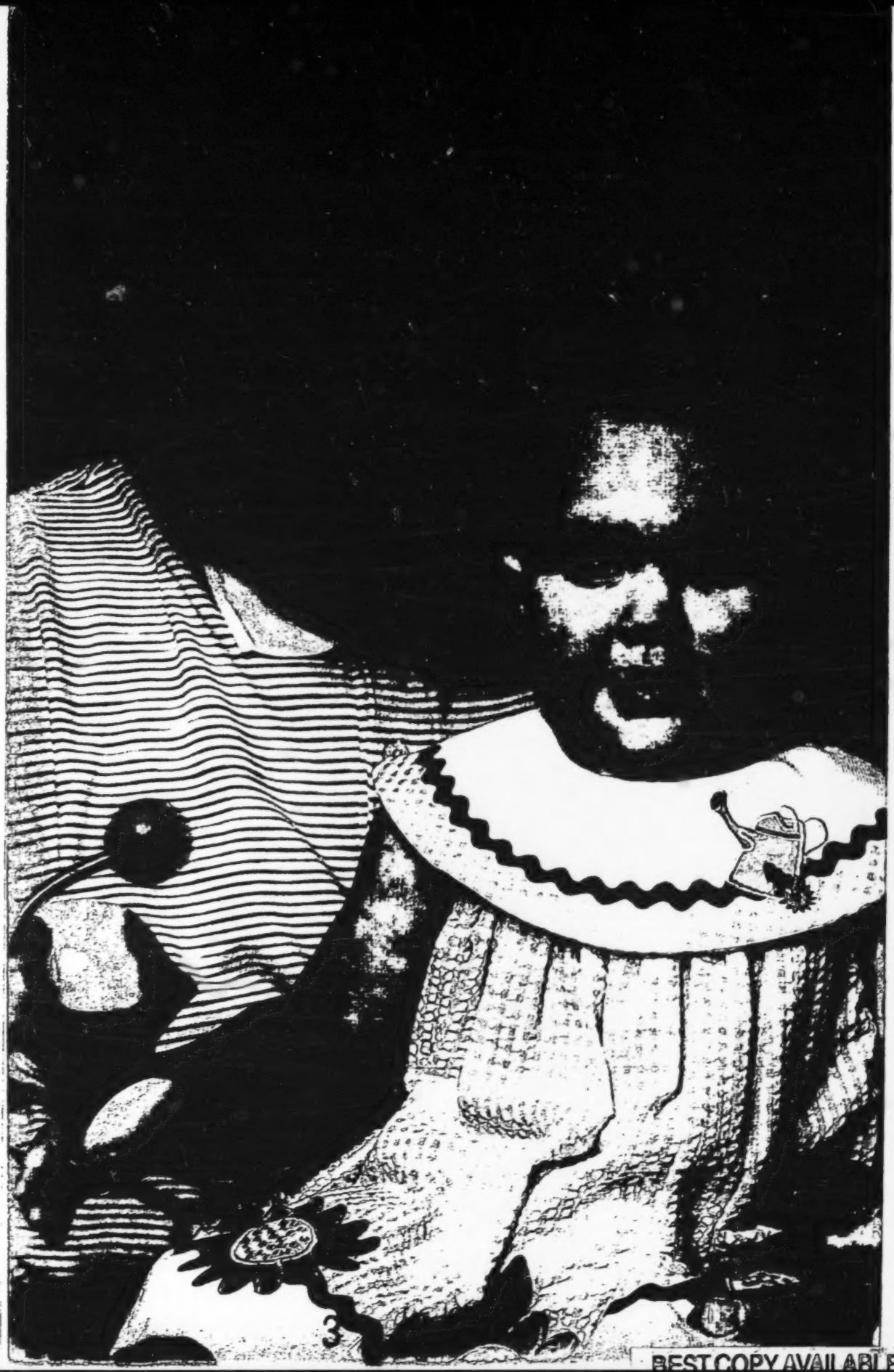

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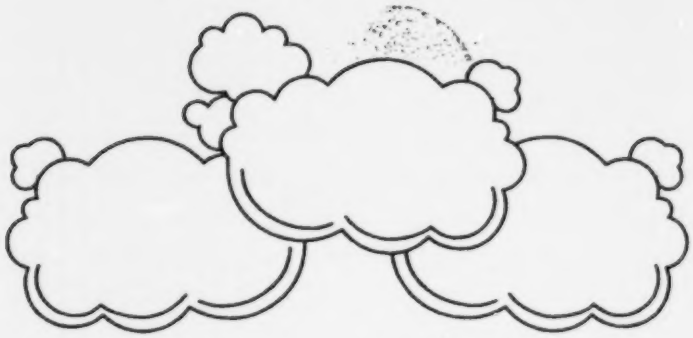

Healthy Start, Grow Smart

Your 12-Month-Old

Prepared by:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Education
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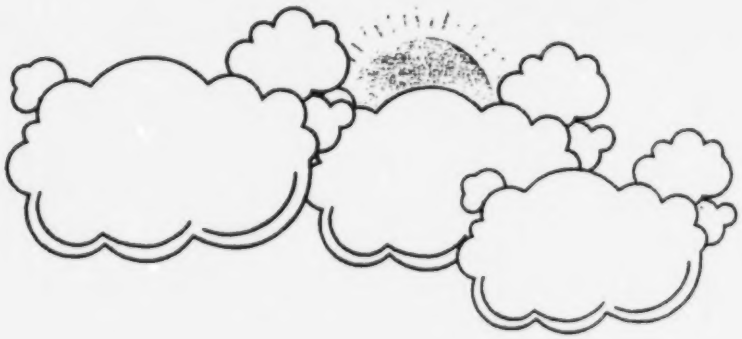

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Let's Celebrate!

Alice has invited a half dozen family members to celebrate Lisette's first birthday. They include Uncle Matt, Aunt Melinda and their 14-month-old son, Jake. Placed together on the floor, Jake and Lisette watch each other at first. Lisette picks up a wooden block and turns it over in her hands. Jake does the same. For the next few minutes, they play with the blocks, watching and copying each other.

"Time to sing," Alice announces. She places Lisette in her high chair, and everyone gathers around. "Happy birthday to you … ." Lisette looks around. Then, clapping her hands, she begins singing, too. "Ay, ay, ay … ." When the song ends, Alice places a cupcake on the tray. Instantly Lisette pokes her finger into the icing and scoops it into her mouth. Flash! Grandma catches the action in a photograph.

Your baby is now a year old! Whether or not you have a party, it's time to rejoice. Your baby has grown and learned a lot in the past 12 months. What happens now? Read this issue to learn more.

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Breastfeeding

Nursing is good for your toddler. If you are breastfeeding, continue as long as you and your toddler enjoy it. Nursing has many benefits:

- ★ Breast milk provides nutrients your child needs.
- ☆ Breast milk helps protect against illness and allergies. If your child does get sick, nursing can be a comfort. In case of an upset stomach, breast milk may be the only thing your child can keep down.
- ★ Nursing is soothing. As toddlers test their independence, they often feel frustrated. Nursing can calm a fussy, tired child. It's also restful for you.
- ★ Nursing saves time and money.

Some tips:

- ★ Give your child plenty of hugs and kisses. You are nursing less often now. Hugs help make up for the loss of closeness.
- ★ Recognize that some people will question nursing after age one. Be ready with answers like: "My doctor endorses it." "Some babies nurse longer than others." "It's a special time we both enjoy." "Breast is best."
- ★ Plan ahead. Nurse your child at home before going out. Bring along crackers or other healthy foods to offer as a snack.

To learn more about breastfeeding, you may want to contact your local health department, WIC clinic, hospital, La Leche League or doctor. You can call La Leche League at 1-800-LALECHE or visit their Web site at www.lalecheleague.org/.

Get some sunshine!

Take your child outdoors a few minutes a day. Sunshine enables the body to make vitamin D. The lack of this vitamin can cause the child's bones to soften. This condition is known as rickets. It can result in bowed or crooked legs.

Dark-skinned children need more sunshine than light-skinned ones. That's because dark skin absorbs less sunlight.

Your doctor may advise giving your child vitamins, especially if you are breastfeeding. A supplement can help ensure that your baby gets enough vitamin D. Check with your doctor.

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Feeding

Giving up the bottle

Learning to drink from a cup takes time. Start by substituting a cup for the bottle at one meal. Once your child has adjusted to that, do the same at another meal.

Your child probably holds the bottle herself. Don't let her walk around with it. This can turn into a habit. Sucking from a bottle off and on all day can lead to many problems. It can result in tooth decay. Or the milk might spoil, making your child sick. She might depend too much on milk or juice and not get enough other foods.

Your child may still want to be rocked with a bottle at bedtime. Try substituting water for milk. Then just offer a cup of water before rocking.

Some tips for giving up the baby bottle

- ★ Don't put your baby to bed with a bottle. If your child must suck for comfort, offer her a pacifier. Offer a "lovey," such as a favorite stuffed toy or a blanket.
- ☆ Offer only milk, fruit juice or water in a cup to drink. Other drinks like tea, punch and soda contain caffeine and sugar. These are not good for growing children.
- ★ Give your child plenty of hugs and kisses. By giving up the bottle, she is giving up a warm, loving ritual.

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Drinking cow's milk

After age one, children no longer need formula. They can drink cow's milk. But make sure it's whole milk, not low-fat or skim milk. Children need milk fat for growth and energy. Serve whole milk until your child is at least two years old.

If you are worried that your child has a milk allergy, talk to your doctor about other options to provide the calcium and other nutrients she needs.

Expect a mess

At this age, children love to experiment. They will dip their fingers into apple juice and smear pudding on their tray. At the same time, they are learning to feed themselves. Milk will get spilled, and food will fall on the floor.

Accept your child's efforts. Gently confine activities to the tray of the high chair. Drape a dishtowel under the child's chin, or use a bib. Put newspaper or an old shower curtain on the floor. This will make cleanup easier.

Other tips for mealtime

- ★ Wash your child's hands before eating. In crawling and moving around, she picks up germs everywhere. Use soap and warm water and rub her hands together briskly.
- ☆ Use dishes that will lessen frustration. Plastic dishes won't break. Shallow bowls and cups with broad bases are less likely to spill. Plates with upturned rims will help keep food in place.
- ★ Serve small portions, just a spoonful or two. Your child wants to show her independence. Let her ask for more when she wants more.
- ★ Watch for signs of fullness. If your child is playing with her food and no longer eating it, it's time to take it away.
- ☆ Wash your child's hands and face after eating. Change a messy shirt, if needed.

Health and Safety

Visit a dentist

It's time for your baby's first trip to the dentist. Call and make an appointment now. It is important to take care of any dental problems early, before they become serious. The dentist can easily check your baby's teeth while your baby sits on your lap. Your dentist can also give you tips on cleaning your baby's teeth.

Are you up to date on your baby's vaccines?

Is your child up to date on her shots? Vaccines help protect against certain diseases. Your doctor or clinic gives vaccines when you bring your child for regular checkups.

Some vaccines are given in two or three doses. Others are given in one dose. Most are given during the first year of a child's life. Some require boosters later.

The timing is important. Vaccines protect children when they are most at risk. The protection from some vaccines may last for years.

When all children are vaccinated, diseases are less likely to break out in the community. They cannot spread to other people. This makes life safer for everyone. This means children won't miss school, and parents won't miss work.

By law, your child must be up to date on vaccines so she can enroll in child care and public school.

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Your baby's shots up to now

During the first year, your child should have had two or three doses of these vaccines:

- ★ DTaP. This protects against three diseases:
  - Diphtheria can clog the throat, making it hard to breathe.
  - Tetanus starts in a cut or wound. It affects the nerves in a way that stiffens the muscles. Another name for it is "lockjaw."
  - Pertussis is whooping cough.
- ★ Polio. This disease can paralyze the whole body for life.
- ★ Hepatitis B. This disease inflames the liver. It can last for months. In some cases, it can result in death.
- ★ PCV. This vaccine protects against infections caused by a specific kind of bacteria. These infections can be in the ears, sinuses, lungs, blood and brain. The infections of the lungs (pneumonia), blood and brain (meningitis) can result in death.
- ★ Hib. This vaccine protects against bacterial infections such as meningitis.

More shots needed now or soon

When your child is 12 to 18 months old, she should get:

- ★ One more dose of all the vaccines above, plus:
- ★ MMR. This protects against three diseases:
  - Measles appears as a red rash. It can make children more at risk for pneumonia and ear infections.
  - Mumps cause throat glands to swell. It can spread to other organs and make men sterile.
  - Rubella is a type of measles. Its main threat is to pregnant women. It can cause a baby to be born deformed in some way.
- ★ Varicella. This vaccine protects against chickenpox. This disease is known for its itchy sores.

Health and Safety continued...

Need to catch up and get shots for your baby?

Your doctor or clinic keeps records of the shots your baby receives. A child who has missed a dose needs to catch up as soon as possible.

Take your child to your doctor or clinic for a 12-month checkup. A nurse will give your child any vaccines that are due. Vaccines can help your child—and the community—stay healthy.

Vaccines are safe

In the early 1900s, childhood diseases were common. Babies died of pneumonia. Schools closed because of measles epidemics. Children were kept from swimming for fear of catching polio.

But today, thanks to vaccines, few children die of these illnesses. In fact, vaccines have nearly wiped out two diseases—smallpox and polio.

Because many childhood diseases are uncommon, some parents think their children don't need vaccines. But if many children go without vaccines, doctors fear a return of the old diseases.

Parents need to understand that vaccines are safe. Before a new vaccine can be given, it goes through at least 10 years of testing. Testing is done by labs and clinics under rules set by the federal government. Yet a vaccine, like any medicine, may involve a risk of harm. But that risk is very small. Taking that risk is better than having a disease.

Get the facts. Talk to your doctor or clinic. Protect your children from disease.

What's It Like To Be One Year Old?

- ★ I've tripled my birth weight and now weigh around 20 pounds.
- ★ I am 26 to 30 inches tall.
- ★ I'm learning to walk, but I still crawl if I want to get somewhere fast.
- ★ I can climb out of my crib.
- ★ I can understand many words and like you to talk to me.
- ☆ I can take lids off containers and open cabinet doors.
- ☆ I like to imitate familiar sounds and may say a few words you can understand.
- ★ I can solve simple problems like finding a lost toy.
- ☆ I have lots of energy and am always on the go.
- ★ I like to push or pull toys when I practice walking.
- ☆ I insist on holding a spoon when I eat, but I'm not too accurate, and I have lots of spills.
- ★ I like to look at pictures in books and magazines.
- ★ I can play by myself for a little while if you are nearby.
- ☆ I may fuss if things don't go my way or if I'm tired or frustrated.

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Baby Games and Activities

Toys for every child

When you're choosing toys for your baby, consider cost and safety. Toys need to be sturdy. They should have smooth edges and not break, splinter or crack. Make sure the toys can be cleaned easily. Test all toys regularly to make sure there are no loose parts.

All babies explore with their mouths. Make sure toys are safe for mouthing. Avoid play materials that are made of foam. Your baby could bite off a piece and choke.

Use these guidelines when you're choosing toys for your baby.

- ★ The toy is interesting to explore and manipulate.
- ★ The toy is not a choking hazard.
- ★ The toy matches the child's physical abilities.
- ★ The toy challenges but does not frustrate.
- ★ The toy is well-constructed and durable.

Great toys for babies

Great toys can help your baby grow and learn. Most are inexpensive. Many can be hand made. Remember to check the toys often for safety.

- ☆ Books—Buy plastic or cardboard picture books. Get books with pictures of common objects.

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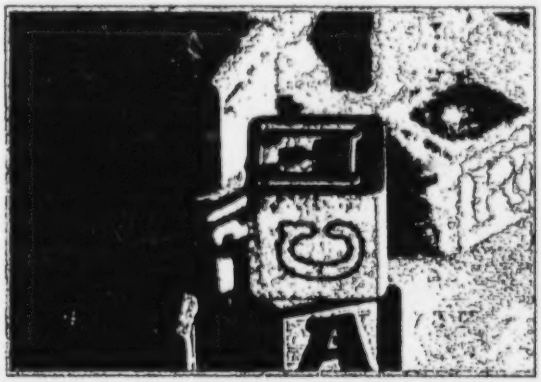
- Dolls—Offer soft, simple dolls with painted faces.
- ☆ Stuffed animals—Provide soft, plush animals with sewn or painted faces.
- ☆ Transportation toys—Buy sturdy, one-piece cars and trucks. Buy toys your baby can carry and roll.
- ☆ Grasping toys—Offer toys that have interesting textures and parts to explore. Examples include plastic linking chains, stacking rings and shape sorters.
- ★ Sand and water toys—Offer unbreakable household cups, spoons, funnels and strainers.
- ★ Construction toys—Buy sturdy wooden blocks. Offer a few at a time for your baby to stack. She will build with them when she's older.
- ★ Puzzles—Buy simple wooden inset puzzles with two to four pieces.



- ★ Mirrors—Share unbreakable hand mirrors. Hang a mirror low on the wall where your baby crawls.
- Nesting and building toys—Buy or gather cups and boxes of various sizes that "nest" inside each other. Turned upside down, they can be stacked on top of each other.
- ★ Balls—Buy a variety of sizes and textures for rolling and tossing.
- ★ Art and craft materials—Offer a few large, nontoxic crayons. Use tape to hold paper in place.
- ☆ Musical instruments—Buy or make shakers, rattles and drums.
- ★ Audio materials—Buy or borrow recordings of simple songs, rhymes and rhythms.

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Routines and Rituals

Learning to use the toilet

After 12 months of dealing with diapers, parents may want a change. Parents often say, "I'll be so glad when she can use the toilet!"

The key is not when you are ready, but when your child is ready. Problems with getting children out of diapers almost always come from trying too soon.

Typically, girls are ready before boys. Some children are ready around age 18 months, while others are not ready until age three.

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When is a child ready?

Your child is ready to learn to use the toilet when she has:

Physical ability

- ★ is able to walk.
- ☆ has a larger bladder, so she urinates fewer times a day.
- ★ wakes up from a nap with a dry diaper.
- ★ can control the muscles that hold and release urine and bowel movements.
- ★ can take underwear off and put it back on.

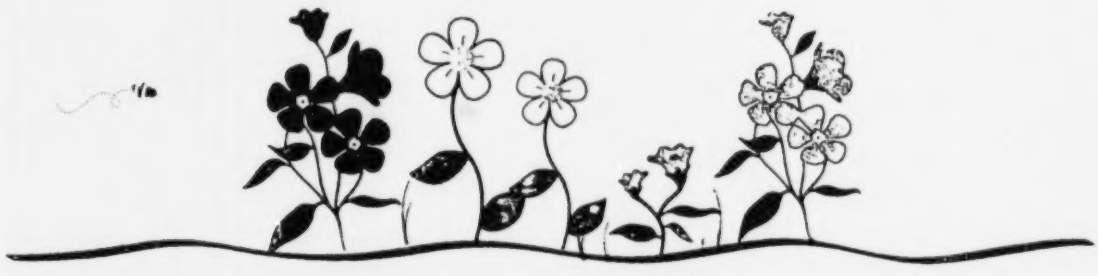
Mental ability

- ☆ understands the body's signals for needing to use the toilet.
- ★ understands words such as "pee-pee," "poo-poo," and "potty."
- ☆ understands what is expected: when to go, what to do and where to do it.

Social and emotional ability

- ★ can express her needs, like telling you that her diaper needs to be changed.
- ★ wants to learn to use the toilet.

When all these abilities are in place, your child can move out of diapers easily. A child who is not ready may resist learning, and parents may become frustrated. Don't force it!



Routines and Rituals continued...

Helping your child learn

Later, when your child is ready to use the toilet, you can make learning easier. Some tips:

- ★ Talk with your caregiver. Parents and caregivers should agree on when a child is ready and what she should be able to do.
- ★ Always supervise your child as she learns to use the toilet. Make sure your child can easily get to the toilet. Put a potty chair in the bathroom or place a sturdy step stool by the toilet. Place toilet paper within easy reach.
- ★ Dress the child in clothing that is easy to take off. These might include a dress, a skirt or pants with an elastic waist.
- ★ Use cloth training pants. Your child will think that disposable paper training pants are the same as diapers.
- ★ Help your child overcome any fear of the toilet. The deep hole and loud flushing noise can seem scary.
- ★ Watch for signs that a child may need to go. This might include a frown or action such as holding her crotch.
- ☆ When the child urinates or has a bowel movement in the toilet, say, "That's good." Avoid making too much of it. Children need to learn to use the toilet for themselves, not to satisfy you.
- ★ Never scold or shame a child for an accident. These are natural body functions, and children easily forget and get distracted.
- ☆ If a child has lots of accidents, go back to diapers for a while. Try again when the child seems ready.
- ★ Go slowly. Learning these skills takes time.

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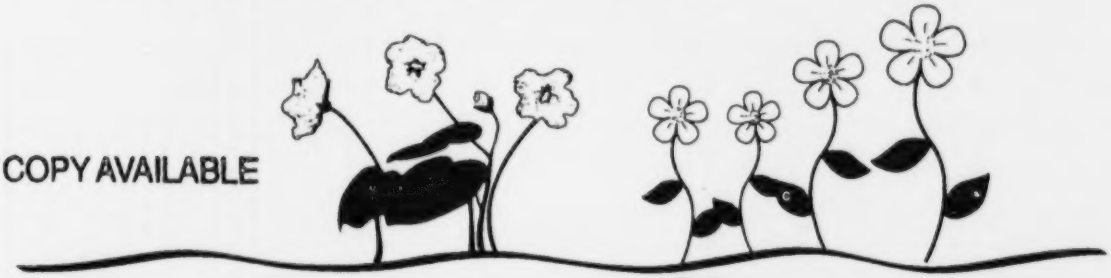
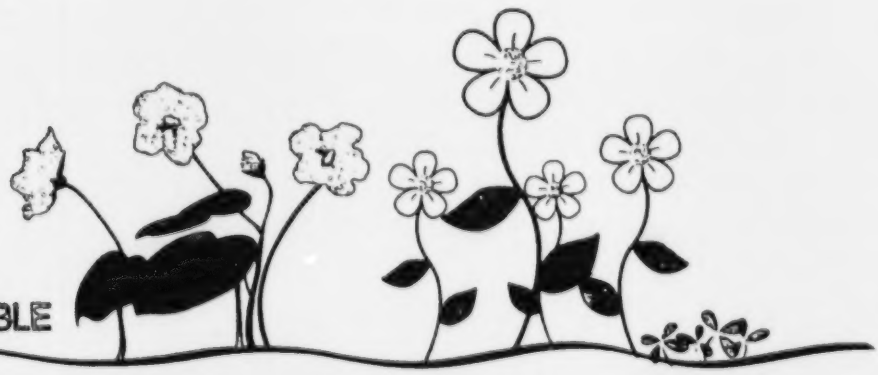


Safety First—at Every Age

Always remember:

- ★ Buckle your baby into a car safety seat before you start the car. Keep the seat facing backward until your baby is one year old and weighs at least 20 pounds. The back seat is the safest place for babies and children.
- ★ Stay with your baby when she is playing near or in water. Never leave your baby alone in a bath or a pool. Babies can drown in just a few inches of water.
- ★ Keep your baby away from things that could burn her. Don't eat, drink, smoke or carry anything hot while holding her.
- ★ Put your baby to sleep on her back unless your doctor has told you to do otherwise. Insist that others who care for your baby do the same.
- ★ Serve healthy foods. Avoid sweetened, salty or fatty ones.
- ★ Lock up guns, alcohol, drugs and chemicals such as cleaning solutions. These can kill your baby.
- ★ Watch for choking hazards like small hard candy, coins, popcorn, grapes and nuts.
- ★ Put away knives, matches and other items that can hurt your baby. Put them in a place your exploring baby can't reach or open.
- ★ Never, ever shake your baby.



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Developmental Stages

Cognitive development

The one-year-old problem solver

Your baby's brain is developing. She can now solve simple problems. This is an important new skill. For example, when your baby holds a mechanical toy out to you and says, "Huh," her brain is working hard. She knows that the toy will work if someone turns the key. She knows that she can't turn the key. So she hands the toy to you. You can turn the key and make the toy work. She is solving a problem.

Your baby solves problems when she pulls a string to move a toy closer. She learns by trial and error that hammering on a pot makes more noise than pounding on the floor.

Babies use problem-solving skills to stack boxes, pull off shoes and socks or push chairs to use for climbing. Babies might work for several minutes opening a container that holds cereal for a snack.

Your baby needs your approval when she masters a task. Clap and encourage her. She will be more likely to try to solve new problems and to develop new brain skills.

Which hand?

Your baby probably prefers to use either her left hand or her right hand for most tasks. You might notice, for example, that she prefers to hold a spoon with her right hand. She picks up toys with her right hand. And she usually turns the pages of a book with her right hand.

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People used to think that being left-handed was bad. Today we know that it doesn't matter which hand a person uses. Complex brain chemistry determines which hand a person prefers. If your baby prefers using her left hand, let her. With your support, she will be as successful as a right-handed child when she feeds herself, plays with toys and does art projects.

Physical development

Building life skills

Life skills are tasks that children learn. They use life skills to take care of themselves. Examples of life skills are eating, dressing and grooming. These skills let children become more independent and confident.

You can practice life skills throughout the day. At mealtime, encourage your baby to feed herself with a spoon or with her fingers. Let her drink from a cup. Encourage independent tooth brushing. Offer your baby a second brush to hold while you clean her teeth. Put a stool near the sink to make hand washing easier.

Let her help with dressing and undressing. Let your baby pull up her own pants or take off her own socks and shoes. Let her help with clean-up tasks, too. Talk about putting toys back on a storage shelf, and let her help you do it.

Don't expect your baby to master these skills any time soon. She may put her pants on backward. She will probably spill more than she eats. She wants to do things for herself but will get frustrated easily. Learning these skills takes practice. Offer your support and be patient. Your child is learning skills that will last a lifetime.

Developmental Stages continued...

Social and emotional development

Learning through play

Your baby tries to play with everything. And everything she plays with teaches her something new. She learns from toys, books and household items. She also learns from interactions with people.

If your baby has older brothers and sisters, she will watch to see how they play with toys. Your baby will want to play the same way. She imitates and copies what other people do.

If your baby is with another child of the same age, she will watch the other child. Sometimes she will copy that child's play. The children may play side by side. But they probably won't interact except to mimic one another.

Your baby will learn most from her interactions with you. Your patience and support will teach her independence. Your encouragement will help her learn that she is unique and has special skills. Your guidance and consistency will help her feel safe. In return, she will share her learning and success.

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Language development

Working on words

Your 12-month-old is probably working hard on her language skills. She shows that she understands many words even though she can't say them. This is called receptive language. For example, when you ask her to hand you a toy or point to a picture in a book, she can do it.

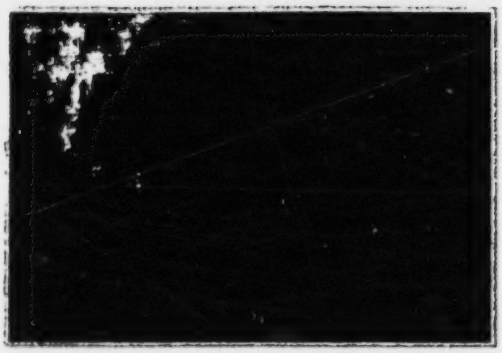
Continue to go slowly with requests. Break activities down into many parts. Your baby will be able to follow simple requests. For example, if you are looking at a picture book, don't say, "Where are the farm animals?" Instead, say things like, "Point to the cow." "Show me the pig." "Do you see a chicken?" Give your baby time to think and respond before you move on to the next animal.

Expressive language—saying words—is developing, too. Your baby makes conversation-like noises, following your speech rhythm. She may say a few words clearly. She will point and gesture to help you understand the words she doesn't pronounce well. Clearly say the word she is trying to use. She will try to imitate you. In time, her speech will become clear and easy to understand.

Remember your baby is working on many skills at the same time. For example, she may be putting a lot of energy into learning to walk. If so, her language development may slow down for a bit. Or she may be trying to get used to a new child-care center. If so, her physical and social skills may stall. Usually, with your support, all areas of development will level out. Remember, if you become worried that her development is delayed, talk to her doctor.

Questions Parents Ask

Question



What are the best shoes for my baby? She is just beginning to walk.

Answer

Many experts suggest that the best shoe is the bare foot. Unfortunately, that is not practical. Children need shoes for protection and warmth. Use these guidelines when shopping for shoes for your young toddler:

- ★ Make sure the shoe fits. A shoe that is too large will make your child trip and fall. A shoe that is too small will cause sores and be painful to wear.
- ☆ Get help checking the fit. Test the length and width of your baby's foot while your baby is standing.
- ★ Buy shoes that protect the feet. The shoes don't need special features like wedges, inserts, high tops or arches unless your baby's doctor recommends them.
- ★ Buy lightweight shoes with flexible, nonslip soles. These features will make it easier for your baby to learn to walk.
- ☆ Don't shop when your baby is tired or hungry. Bring along a favorite toy or book and a snack in case you have to wait for sales help.
- ★ Compare prices and look for the best value. Your baby will probably outgrow her shoes several times a year. Check the fit regularly. Don't buy ahead. Avoid hand-me-down shoes.

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Early Intervention and Your Baby's Developing Skills

Children learn skills as they grow. These skills happen by certain ages. A child learns skills at her own pace. You can see how your baby is doing. Watch when she starts to crawl, walk, talk and feed herself.

If you are concerned that your baby is learning skills too slowly, talk to your doctor. You can also call 1-800-695-0285 to get information. The call is free. When you call, you will be told how to contact the early intervention program in your state. Staff at your state's early intervention program can assist you in finding help in your area.

What is an early intervention program?

An early intervention program helps children from birth to age three. Early intervention staff can help your baby learn to roll over, sit up, crawl and grasp toys.

They also help children who are having problems with seeing, hearing and talking.

How does an early intervention program help?

It can help your child with needed services and also help you join a support group.

Your family and early intervention staff can work together to plan services. These services teach basic skills and can be done in your home or during child care.

Guidance

Setting limits

There are two main reasons for parents to make rules for their children. The first is to keep children safe. The second is to help children learn self-control.

Your baby needs to know that she can depend on you to set limits for safety and guidance. Use these guidelines when you set limits for your baby:

- ★ Make rules that develop the self-esteem and dignity of your baby. Don't have rules that make her feel bad about herself. For example, when she's trying to say a new word and mispronounces it, say the word correctly. Don't scold, mock, or repeat the "baby" word.
- ☆ Make rules that are clear to your baby. Your baby needs to be told the rule, again and again. For example, you don't want your baby to pull your hair. If she pulls it again after you told her that it hurts, simply put her down. Say, "I can't hold you when you pull my hair. I won't let you hurt me."
- ★ Make rules that you can enforce. Avoid threats like "If you splash, I'll never let you play in water again." Instead, state clearly that you expect the water to stay in the sink while your baby pours from cup to cup. If she splashes the water, restate the rule and tell her that her water play is over for the day.
- ★ Enforce rules consistently. Your baby needs to learn that rules are important to her safety and that they don't change from day to day. For example, you have a rule that your baby always rides in a car safety seat. This rule should be the same in all cars, no matter who is driving. If you bend the rule once, she will test it again and again.
- ★ Childproof your home so it is a safe place for your baby to play and explore. You'll spend less time making and enforcing rules.

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TV time?

Your baby is too active to watch TV now. She is curious about the things in the real world: kitchen spoons, blades of grass and newspapers. Her attention span is too short to sit still and watch TV for even a minute. This means that she won't be interested in videos or movies, either.

When you watch TV, watching it takes time away from your baby. It's hard to enjoy a show and care for your baby at the same time. It's best to save your TV watching until she naps or goes to bed at night. Instead of watching TV, read a book to her.

Sing a song or dance to music. Play a game such as "drop the ball in the oatmeal box." These activities help develop her brain. They strengthen her social skills. They help her feel loved and happy.

If you watch TV while your baby sleeps, turn down the sound and darken her room. You don't want her to think she's missing something fun.

Avoid having the TV on all day as background noise. A silent black box will be less interesting to explore. Limiting TV time is a good habit to start now. Later, when she's in school, your child will need time to read and do her homework.

Parenting Styles

Find your style of parenting

There are many ideas about how to rear children. Some parents adopt the ideas their own parents used. Others get advice from friends. Some read books about parenting. Others take classes offered in the community. No one has all the answers. However, psychologists and other social scientists now know what parenting practices are most effective and are more likely to lead to positive outcomes for children.

Ideas about child rearing can be grouped into three styles. These are different ways of deciding who is responsible for what in a family.

Authoritarian

Authoritarian parents always try to be in control and exert their control on the children. These parents set strict rules to try to keep order, and they usually do this without much expression of warmth and affection. They attempt to set strict standards of conduct and are usually very critical of children for not meeting those standards. They tell children what to do, they try to make them obey and they usually do not provide children with choices or options.

Authoritarian parents don't explain why they want their children to do things. If a child questions a rule or command, the parent might answer, "Because I said so." Parents tend to focus on bad behavior, rather than positive behavior, and children are scolded or punished, often harshly, for not following the rules.

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Children with authoritarian parents usually do not learn to think for themselves and understand why the parent is requiring certain behaviors.

Permissive

Permissive parents give up most control to their children. Parents make few, if any, rules, and the rules that they make are usually not consistently enforced. They don't want to be tied down to routines. They want their children to feel free. They do not set clear boundaries or expectations for their children's behavior and tend to accept in a warm and loving way, however the child behaves.

Permissive parents give children as many choices as possible, even when the child is not capable of making good choices. They tend to accept a child's behavior, good or bad, and make no comment about whether it is beneficial or not. They may feel unable to change misbehavior, or they choose not to get involved.

Democratic or authoritative

Democratic parents help children learn to be responsible for themselves and to think about the consequences of their behavior. Parents do this by providing clear, reasonable expectations for their children and explanations for why they expect their children to behave in a particular manner. They monitor their children's behavior to make sure that they follow through on rules and expectations. They do this in a warm and loving manner. They often, "try to catch their children being good" and reinforcing the good behavior, rather than focusing on the bad.

Parenting Styles continued...

For example, a child who leaves her toys on a staircase may be told not to do this because, "Someone could trip on them and get hurt and the toy might be damaged." As children mature, parents involve children in making rules and doing chores: "Who will mop the kitchen floor, and who will carry out the trash?"

Parents who have a democratic style give choices based on a child's ability. For a toddler, the choice may be "red shirt or striped shirt?" For an older child, the choice might be "apple, orange or banana?" Parents guide children's behavior by teaching, not punishing. "You threw your truck at Mindy. That hurt her. We're putting your truck away until you can play with it safely."

Which is your style?

Maybe you are somewhere in between. Think about what you want your children to learn. Research on children's development shows that the most positive outcomes for children occur when parents use democratic styles. Children with permissive parents tend to be aggressive and act out, while children with authoritarian parents tend to be compliant and submissive and have low self-esteem.

No parenting style will work unless you build a loving bond with your child.

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Parenting tips

- ☆ Treat your child with respect. Talk to her and ask questions. Be polite. Avoid nagging, yelling and hitting. If your child misbehaves in public, take her home. Avoid humiliating her. Maybe she is tired or hungry. Next time, plan the outing after she has had a nap and a snack.
- ★ Be consistent. Don't be permissive one moment and strict the next. Make sure rules apply to everyone, even you. Make promises only when you're sure you can keep them.
- ★ As parents, consult with each other and maintain a united front so that your child will not try to "play off" one parent against the other.
- ★ Encourage your child. Help build confidence. Say, "I know you can do it." Tell her, "You worked really hard on that." Avoid criticism. Don't compare one child to another.
- ☆ Express love. Say the words: "I love you." Give pats, hugs, and kisses.
- ☆ Take time for fun. Do things you both enjoy.

Remember "HALT"

Feeling mad or cranky? Afraid you might hurt your baby or do something rash? Whenever you feel out of sorts, think, "HALT."

- ★ Hungry—Have you missed breakfast? Is it mealtime, but you're running late? Stop what you're doing. Eat something—an apple, a sandwich or the meal you have prepared.
- ☆ Angry—Are you angry about something? Stop what you're doing. Think back to what made you angry. Maybe the car broke down. Maybe someone hurt your feelings. Accept your angry feelings, but don't act them out. Count to 10. Take a few deep breaths. Your angry feelings will pass, and things will get better.
- ★ Lonely—Are you lonely? Do you feel you spend all your time with your baby and few grown-ups? Stop what you're doing. Call a friend. Take your baby and visit a neighbor. Be with people who care about you.
- ★ Tired—Are you tired? Maybe you didn't sleep well last night. Maybe you have worked hard all day. Stop what you're doing. Put your baby in the crib or another safe place. Sit with your feet up and relax for a few minutes. Or forget about chores and go to bed early.

Thinking "HALT" can often pinpoint what's wrong. It can prevent you from doing something you will regret later. It reminds you to take care of yourself and do what is best for your baby.

Getting Help

Hiring a baby-sitter

Baby-sitting isn't for everyone. Baby-sitters keep your children safe and happy while you are away for a short time. Use the guidelines below. They will keep your baby safe and help your baby-sitter do a good job.

- ★ Ask for names and phone numbers of people who have hired the baby-sitter before. Call these people and ask what they liked and didn't like about this sitter.
- ☆ Interview the baby-sitter. Look for someone who is trustworthy, capable and comfortable with babies.
- ★ Have a trial run. Have the sitter care for your baby while you are at home. You can watch the sitter with your baby.
- ★ Describe your routines. Give the sitter information on your baby's habits and preferences for eating, diapering, playing and sleeping.
- ★ Give clear instructions. Make sure the sitter knows how to deal with emergencies.
- ☆ Tell the sitter how you can be reached. Give the sitter the name and phone number of a friend or relative to call if you can't be reached.
- ☆ Write down the phone number of the baby's doctor.
- ★ Give a tour of your house. Let the sitter know about anything unusual.
- ★ Let the sitter know when you'll be home. Call if you will be late.
- ☆ Make sure the baby-sitter understands all your safety rules for your baby.

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Information Resources for Families

Families who are enrolled in the WIC program (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children) can get information on breastfeeding, formula feeding and nutrition at their local WIC office. Families eligible for WIC receive nutrition counseling and supplemental foods such as baby formula, milk and cereal. To find the WIC office nearest you, call your state health department or visit the WIC Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/wic/. Many public libraries offer free access to the Internet and provide help for first-time users.

For information about early childhood education initiatives, you may contact the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit the Web site at www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/teachingouryoungest/.

To learn about child care options, you may contact the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Aware by phone at 1-800-424-2246 or visit their Web site at www.childcareaware.org/.

For more information and resources on postpartum depression, breastfeeding and many other women's health issues call The National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) at 1-800-994-9662 (1-800-994-WOMAN). You can visit their Web site at www.4woman.org/.

To learn more about breastfeeding, you may call La Leche League at 1-800-LALECHE or visit their Web site at www.lalecheleague.org/.

To learn more about free or low-cost health insurance for children, you can call the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Insure Kids Now program at 1-877-KIDSNOW. You can also visit their Web site at www.insurekidsnow.gov/.

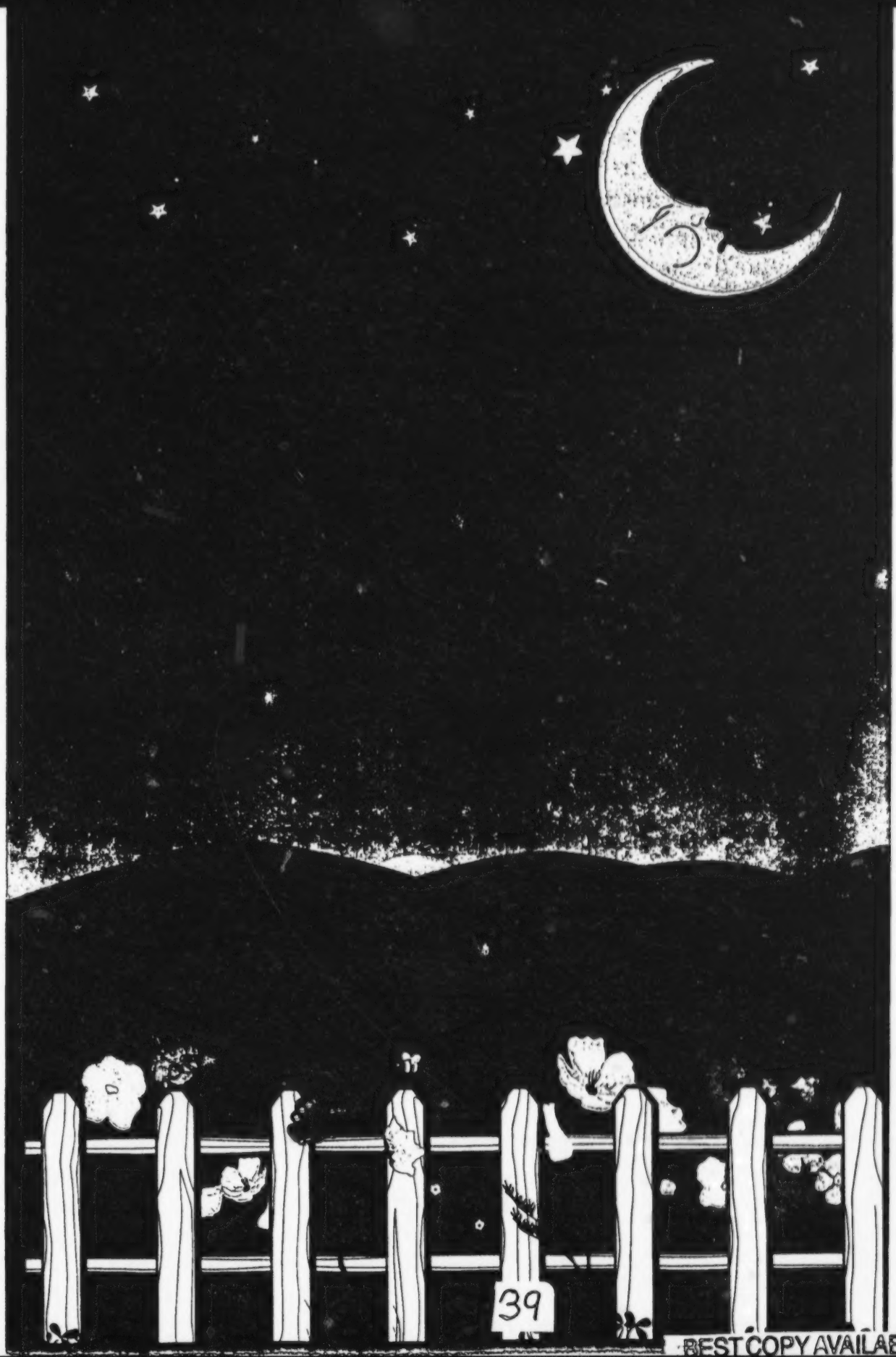
The American Association of Poison Control Centers' (AAPCC) poison control hotline, 1-800-222-1222, should be on your list of emergency numbers. To learn more, you can visit the AAPCC Web site at www.aapcc.org/.

Families who cannot afford a car safety seat can contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. They can provide information on resources that help low-income families purchase or borrow child car seats. You may call them at 1-800-424-9393 or visit their Web site at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

To learn more about safety, you can call the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772 or you can visit their Web site at www.cpsc.gov/.

For information on disabilities and disability-related issues for families, you can call the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) at 1-800-695-0285 or visit their Web site at www.nichcy.org/.

For information about programs that teach adults how to read, you can call America's Literacy Directory at 1-800-228-8813 or visit their Web site at: www.literacydirectory.org/.



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